

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 01378 251348Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00
 INR-07 NSAE-00 /030 W
 -----251456 043405 /46

R 251232Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6747
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMCONSUL MUNICH

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EO 11652N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PL
SUBJ: POLISH EPISCOPATE WARNS OF COUNTERFEIT CHURCH PUBLICATION

1. SUMMARY: ZYCIE WARSZAWY OF FEBRUARY 24 CARRIES WHAT REPORTEDLY IS THE FULL TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARIAT OF THE POLISH EPISCOPATE WARNING THE PUBLIC OF THE RECENT DISTRIBUTION IN POLAND OF A COUNTERFEIT EDITION OF A BOOK ENTITLED HOLY CROSS SERMONS 1974 (KAZANIA SWIETOKRZYSKIE 1974), ATTRIBUTED TO CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI. THE WARNING WAS PRINTED IN ZYCIE WARSZAWY "AT THE REQUEST OF THE SECRETARIAT." THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN THE EMBASSY'S INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY THAT A MASS CIRCULATION, DAILY POLISH NEWSPAPER HAS CARRIED A FULL TEXT OF AN EPISCOPATE COMMUNIQUE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE STATEMENT EXPLAINS THAT IN JANUARY 1974, 1975, AND 1976, CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI PREACHED AT THE CHURCH OF THE
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PAGE 02 WARSAW 01378 251348Z

HOLY CROSS IN WARSAW. THESE SERMONS WERE PRINTED IN THREE VOLUMES BY THE SANTA SEVERA PUBLISHING HOUSE IN ROME. THE FIRST VOLUME, ENTITLED "HOLY CROSS SERMONS, ROME 1974" HAS ALREADY BEEN ISSUED. "UNKNOWN PERSONS," HOWEVER, HAVE BEGUN DISTRIBUTING BY MAIL A VOLUME ENTITLED "HOLY CROSS SERMONS 1974", SUPPOSEDLY PRINTED BY THE SAME FIRM. THIS BOOK, WHICH IS IDENTICAL IN APPEARANCE WITH THE

ORIGINAL, IS COUNTERFEIT AND WAS NOT PUBLISHED BY SANTA SEVERA. CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI'S SERMONS HAVE BEEN DISTORTED AND IN PLACES TOTALLY FALSIFIED. THE EPISCOPATE WARNS THOSE WHO MAY HAVE RECEIVED COPIES OF THE COUNTERFEIT TO DISREGARD ITS CONTENTS.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE EPISCOPATE'S STATEMENT GIVES NO CLUE AS TO THE TYPE OF DISTORTIONS MADE IN THE COUNTERFEIT BOOK, OR AT WHOM THEY WERE DIRECTED, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE COUNTERFEIT EDITION IS AN ATTEMPT BY AN UNKNOWN GROUP TO PROTRAY CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI AS EVEN MORE SHARPLY OPPOSED TO THE POLISH COMMUNIST REGIME AND ITS POLICIES THAN HE ACTUALLY IS. IS SO, THE PUBLICATION OF THE COMMUNIQUE IN ZYCIE WARSZAWY WOULD SERVE BOTH REGIME AND CHURCH INTERESTS. MOREOVER, APPEARANCE OF THE COMMUNIQUE IN ZYCIE MAY ALSO REPRESENT A PARTIAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO RENEWED CHURCH PRESSURE FOR ACCESS TO THE POLISH PUBLIC THROUGH THE MEDIA.
END COMMENT.
DAVIES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PUBLICATIONS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, COUNTERFEITING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977WARSAW01378
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770065-1365
Format: TEL
From: WARSAW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977026/aaaaafur.tel
Line Count: 82
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e299acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3371081
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLISH EPISCOPATE WARNS OF COUNTERFEIT CHURCH PUBLICATION
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e299acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009